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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT : Power Failure in "L" Building

1. On Thursday, 6 May 1954, electric service to "L" Building and a portion of "K" Building was interrupted from 2:18 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Friday, 7 May 1954.

2. This interruption resulted from the failure of a Government owned transformer located in the area of [REDACTED]. The failure caused a short in the Potomac Electric Power Company's main cable supplying power to the Government owned bank of transformers servicing "K" and "L" Buildings. This, of course, interrupted the electric service to "K" and "L" Buildings. I have been advised the failure has been traced to faulty workmanship on the part of the contractor who installed the Government owned transformers in the area of [REDACTED] and that it was not due to any overload.

3. Such power failures are most inconvenient and regrettable. I wish it were possible to prevent them. To make certain power failures do not interrupt functions considered vital to Agency operations, four standby emergency generators have been installed. These are located at South Building to service the Director's Office and the telephone exchange; at "Q" Building to service the watch office and the secondary signal center; at Quarters I to service [REDACTED] and at "L" Building to service the major signal center, this generator was out in to furnish power to the signal center during the failure.

4. In view of the infrequency of power failures and the cost of emergency equipment, it would be most difficult, if not impossible, to justify emergency power for the entire headquarters area. If, however, you believe there are certain areas where emergency power service is vital and necessary to Agency operations, I will endeavor to obtain it.

/s/
L. K. WHITEActing Deputy Director
(Administration)

SA/DDA:WPH:hh (12 May 54)

1 - BD/A chrono

1 - DD/A subject